

## **A conversation with Development Media International, February 12, 2015**

### **Participants**

- Roy Head – CEO, Development Media International
- Dr. Jo Murray – Research Manager, Development Media International
- Will Snell – Director of Public Engagement & Development, Development Media International
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**Note:** These notes were compiled by GiveWell and give an overview of the major points made by Development Media International.

### **Summary**

GiveWell spoke with Development Media International (DMI) to learn about the charity's plans for 2015 in preparation for this year's recommendation cycle. Conversation topics included DMI's status in GiveWell's 2015 top charity recommendation cycle, how DMI is using GiveWell-directed funding, and potential upcoming DMI campaigns.

### **DMI's status in GiveWell's 2015 recommendation cycle**

The impact of DMI's campaign in Burkina Faso is being evaluated by a randomized controlled trial (RCT) conducted by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM).

### **Timing of the RCT's endline results**

The data collection and analysis of the RCT's endline results is being conducted by LSHTM researchers; this process is entirely independent of DMI.

The endline results of the RCT are currently being collected; collection will be finished by mid-April. DMI expects to see the endline data by September. The endline results will likely be submitted to the Lancet for publication in December, but may be delayed. The results will probably be published in the Lancet in March or April 2016.

### *Sharing RCT endline results with GiveWell*

If the data analysis is not delayed, DMI could share the headline endline results with GiveWell by September or October under strict embargo (unable to be published or discussed publicly).

GiveWell will not be able to see the dataset prior to publication of the endline results, only the headline mortality and cost-effectiveness figures. DMI is also unable to see the dataset prior to publication.

## **How DMI is using GiveWell-directed money**

DMI received approximately \$510,000 from GiveWell's recommendation and Good Ventures' grants. This total is not enough to launch a new mass media campaign in another country. Thus, DMI is planning on spending the money it received from its GiveWell recommendation on current campaigns.

DMI is planning to hold some of the GiveWell-directed money for a few months to take advantage of potential matching opportunities with other donors (e.g. a donor who offers to provide \$1 million for a campaign that costs \$1.5 million). Finding a matching opportunity is quite likely; there is perhaps a 50% chance of this happening.

DMI's most likely plan is to hold most of the GiveWell-directed money for 4-6 months, then apply it to the nationwide scale-up of the Burkina Faso campaign. Another likely outcome is putting the funding towards a campaign in Mozambique.

## **Burkina Faso monitoring and evaluation researchers**

DMI is planning to use about \$100,000 of the GiveWell-directed funds to hire about 7 researchers for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the scaled-up Burkina Faso campaign. Each researcher will be assigned to a region (of 3-4 radio stations), and will work for about one week a month collecting data on DMI's impact. Time series analyses can be carried out with this monthly data to evaluate DMI's impact.

DMI is considering technologies that could be used for this program, such as mobile phones or tablets. Mobile devices could transmit the data quickly to DMI's central office in Ouagadougou, where a data manager could collate data from all the researchers. The data would then be sent to DMI's head office in London for analysis.

Two out of the three main funders of the Burkina Faso campaign are not paying for any impact evaluation. The Burkina Faso campaign is scaling from seven clusters to 28 clusters, and M&E is not a funder priority. DMI is committing to building M&E into its approach as a core cost – an element of every campaign it conducts.

Time series evaluation allows for multiple campaigns in a region to be evaluated without having to conduct a baseline and endline for each one separately. This allows campaigns to be initiated in a more fluid manner – evaluation will be ongoing.

The M&E regional researchers will allow DMI to collect more data about the supply-side situation in each zone as the Burkina Faso campaign scales to 28 zones. This would be difficult to do with DMI's current qualitative research team alone.

The M&E researchers are different from the trackers, who are amateurs employed to check just on whether DMI spots are being played on the radio. The M&E researchers are also different from the current research team, which uses qualitative methods such as focus groups. The M&E researchers will replace the

evaluation work that Centre Muraz and LSHTM are currently doing as part of the RCT.

## **Upcoming DMI campaigns**

### **Burkina Faso**

#### *RCT wrap-up*

The endline survey for the RCT is ongoing and will be ending in mid-April. DMI's office in Ouagadougou is preparing for the expansion to the nationwide, 28-zone campaign.

#### *Scale-up to the nationwide campaign*

As of April 2015, DMI has signed contracts with all four funders of its scale-up in Burkina Faso on 28 community radio stations: Alive & Thrive, Strengthening Partnerships, Results and Innovations in Nutrition Globally (SPRING, a USAID initiative) Comic Relief, and the Vitol Foundation.

#### *Other opportunities in Burkina Faso*

DMI has funded its highest-value opportunities in Burkina Faso, though it could do more in the country. For instance:

- Create a Burkinabé television campaign
- Solidify relationships with partner radio stations, most likely by bartering solar power generators for station performance and cooperation
- Further radio messaging
- Additional RCTs, for example an RCT on family planning

DMI is currently spending about \$2 million in Burkina Faso. In addition to this, DMI could spend approximately \$1 million developing a television campaign and approximately \$1 million strengthening relationships with radio stations. On top of this, DMI could fund further trials in Burkina Faso. Because of its uniquely fragmented media environment, Burkina Faso is well-suited for studies of mass media campaigns.

### **The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**

DMI is beginning two projects in the DRC – a maternal & child health radio campaign and a family planning television and radio campaign. After a brief delay due to unrest in Kinshasa, these campaigns are proceeding as planned.

DMI expects broadcasting in the DRC to start this May. In April, before broadcasting begins, baseline surveys are being conducted in the broadcast areas (by the Kinshasa School of Public Health). Data from the baseline survey should be available in July. Message briefs for these campaigns should be written, approved, and able to be shared by around May.

DMI's key priority for the DRC is to raise follow-on funding so the broadcast campaigns can run for longer than one year.

### **Mozambique**

DMI has recruited a country representative for Mozambique with funding from the Mulago Foundation. This representative will be working to secure funding for two projects – a national radio and TV child health campaign and a study of the effects of mass media campaigns on tuberculosis case detection and treatment.

### **Other opportunities**

DMI is considering other opportunities in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Cameroon. These opportunities are in the early stages of development.

### **Summary of DMI documents reviewed in February 2015**

Following this call, DMI sent GiveWell several documents for review. DMI requested that most of this content remain private. The list below is what GiveWell can share publicly about these documents:

- DMI has sent proposals for three large-scale projects (in Mozambique, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso) to prospective funders.
- As a precaution against significant political upheaval in Burkina Faso, DMI closed its Ouagadougou office for three days in October 2014. Overall, the unrest had little impact on DMI broadcasts (one of DMI's partner radio stations suspended long-format programming as a result of the unrest). DMI's Ouagadougou office has been operating normally since the unrest.
- GiveWell has received DMI's 2014 financial information and 2015 budget for review.
- A redacted version of DMI's Q4 2014 Report is available at GiveWell's February 2015 update on DMI (see <http://www.givewell.org/international/top-charities/DMI/all-content>)

*All GiveWell conversations are available at <http://www.givewell.org/conversations>*